

Your Residential and Small Commercial Utility Consumer Advocate

### Consumer Newsletter

**Utah Department of Commerce** 

### **Governor Urges Utahns to**



### and Conserve



#### **Inside this issue:**

Reduce Energy Consumption and Save

Kudos to Modern Evaporative Cooling

Weatherization Assistance and Cash Incentives

Energy Efficiency Tips

made energy efficiency and conservation a priority for Utah. On April 26, 2006, the Governor set forth a policy to increase Utah energy efficiency 20% by 2015, saving Utah citizens energy and money.

To promote an ethic of

Governor Huntsman has

To promote an ethic of energy conservation and efficient use of electricity, the Utah Department of Environmental Quality and Utah's electric utilities have joined together to sponsor Utah's Summer Power Conservation Program:

### **PowerForward**

At the heart of this program is the PowerForward alert system. The color-coded alert system

notifies citizens and businesses on days when additional conservation measures are needed.

A GREEN PowerForward Day recommends normal conservation measures: replace incandescent light bulbs with CFL bulbs; set air conditioning thermostats to higher setting; and run dishwasher and laundry equipment only when fully loaded.

### A YELLOW Power-

Forward Day urges extra conservation measures: turn off all unnecessary lights, appliances, and electronic equipment; when away from home, set air conditioning thermostats to

85 degrees; cook in microwave oven; and run dishwasher and laundry equipment after 8:00 p.m.

### A RED PowerForward

Day alerts consumers to use critical conservation measures: turn off all but emergency electric needs; if health permits, turn off air conditioning and keep home cool by closing drapes/blinds during the heat of the day; and prepare food that does not require electricity.

Utahns are encouraged to sign up to receive PowerForward email alerts. To sign-up and receive power saving tips, please visit: powerforward.utah.gov or call 801-536-4020.

# Celebrating 30 Years of Consumer

CCS

Advocacy

3 YEARS

1977-2007

### **Director Michele Beck Addresses UAE Members**

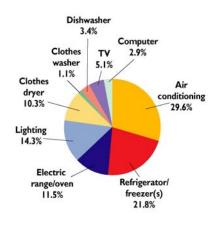
The Utah Association of Energy Users (UAE) invited Committee Director Michele Beck to speak at its April Breakfast Meeting. Michele explained her regulatory philosophy and outlined goals for the Committee. Goals included expanding consumer education regarding regulatory processes in regulated industries, as well as energy conservation and efficiency measures. A new educational Web site will be launched this fall.

### Reduce Energy Consumption and Save Energy Consumption Primarily Determines Your Total Bill

As the Utah summer temperature goes up, so may your electricity bill.

According to Energy Information Administration (EIA), air conditioning is the single most electricity-intensive appliance in our homes.

As indicated in the chart below, almost thirty percent of the average Utah residential customer's summer bill can be attributed to cooling the home.



Source: Rocky Mountain Power, Utah Average Residential Electrical Usage

It is not uncommon for a home with central air conditioning to have a summer bill with usage that is three to four times greater than other times of the year.

## What can you do to lower your energy consumption and reduce your electricity bills?

Conservation and increased efficiency are popular and effective methods to help you save energy and expense. Below are energy savings tips to help you lower your energy costs this summer:

- Seal air leaks around doors and windows.
- Clean air-conditioner filters and coils every month.
- Use a programmable thermostat and set it 10 degrees higher when you're not at home.
- During the day, try to reduce the use of heat producing

- appliances such as the oven, dishwasher, and dryer.
- Don't place lamps or televisions near air conditioning thermostat as the heat from the appliances may cause it to run longer than necessary.
- Consider using Rocky
   Mountain Power's "Cool
   Keeper" program, which
   cycles your air conditioner
   on and off during peak demand, and receive a \$20 annual bill credit.

Reducing energy consumption saves energy and money, especially during peak demand periods when power costs are highest.

To learn more about Rocky Mountain Power's "Cool Keeper" program, visit utahpower.net/coolkeeper or call 1-800-357-9214.

### **Kudos to Modern Evaporative Cooling**

If you are planning to install a new central air conditioner, you may want to consider evaporative cooling. Did you know that Utah's climate is ideally suited for evaporative cooling—which can lead to significant savings on your summer electricity costs versus a central conditioning system?

Evaporative cooling is again of interest in the West because of its potential to reduce electricity consumption and peak power demand. According to Southwest Energy Efficiency Project (SWEEP), modern evaporative cooling systems can use 80 to 90 percent less electricity for cooling compared to standard

air conditioning systems.

Newer units are more compact, require less maintenance, and are less water-intensive.

SWEEP estimates that a typical resident of the West could save between \$100 to \$500 per year on cooling costs by using modern evaporative cooling over conventional air conditioning.

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### Weatherization: Existing Home Savings Programs

Weatherization is a smart and easy way to improve your existing home's energy efficiency. Making energy-efficient improvements to your home can make you and your family more comfortable, while saving energy and money. Adding insulation, Energy Star qualified windows, or high-efficiency appliances can save you money on your energy bill. Below are some savings programs that will help you weatherize your existing home:

 The U.S. Department of Energy initiated the Weatherization Assistance Program. This federal program helps low-income house-

holds, particularly elderly and disabled residence, reduce their energy consumption and save. In Utah, this program is administered by the Utah Division of Housing & Community Development. Benefits are provided in the form of non-cash grants to eligible households to make energy-efficiency improvements to their homes. To find out if you or someone you know is eligible for benefits, visit: www.community.utah.gov or call (877) 488-3233.

Weatherization programs are also available to Questar Gas Company and Rocky Mountain Power customers. For information about Questar Gas ThermWise Weatherization Rebates Program, visit Therm-Wise.com or call (801) 323-5517. For information about Rocky Mountain Power's Home Energy Savings Program, visit: homeenergysavings.net/utah/home or call (800) 942-0266.

Information about state and federal tax credits for energy efficiency may be accessed at:
www.energystar.gov and www.energy.utah.gov.

### **Energy Efficiency Tips To Make Your Home (and Wallet) More Comfortable**



Windows can be one of your home's most attractive features. Windows

provide views, daylighting, ventilation, and passive solar heating in the winter. Unfortunately, they can also account for 10% to 25% of your heating bill. And, during the summer, your air conditioner must work harder to cool hot air from sunny windows.

If your home has single-pane

windows, as almost half of U.S. homes do, you may want to consider replacing them. New double-pane windows with high-performance glass (e.g., low-emissivity or spectrally selective) are available on the market.

In colder climates, select windows that are gas filled with low emissivity (low-e) coatings on the glass to reduce heat loss. In warmer climates, select windows with spectrally selective coatings to reduce heat gain. If

you are building a new home, you can offset some of the cost of installing more efficient windows because doing so allows you to buy smaller, less expensive heating and cooling equipment.

Installing new, highperformance windows will improve your home's energy performance. While it may take a few years for new windows to pay off in energy savings, the benefits of added comfort and (Continued on page 4)



### Your Residential and Small Commercial Utility Consumer Advocate

### **Utah Committee of Consumer Services**

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### **Energy Efficiency Tips** (Continued from page 3)

improved aesthetics and functionality may make the investment well worth it to you.

If you decide not to replace your windows, below are some simple measures that can improve window performance during the heat of the summer:

- Install white window shades, drapes, or blinds to reflect heat away from the house.
- Close curtains on southand west-facing windows during the day.
- Install awnings on south-

and west-facing windows.

 Apply sun-control or other reflective films on southfacing windows to reduce solar gain.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy, Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

#### **\$\$ CASH INCENTIVES**

Rocky Mountain Power and Questar Gas Company offer cash incentives or rebates to their customers for energy-efficient windows. Tax credits are also available for Energy Star windows. The Committee of
Consumer Services is
a Utah state governmental agency that
represents the interests of small business
owners, farmers and
ranchers, and residential consumers of
natural gas, electric,
and telephone utilities.

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